

NOTES ON SENECA, *DIALOGI*

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1.6.7 (loquitur deus) "... *nihil feci facilius quam mori. prono animam loco posui, trahitur*; *ad*tendite modo et videbitis quam brevis ad libertatem et quam expedita ducat via."

For the corrupt (or lacunose) passage a list of ten emendations can be compiled from the editions of Hermes and Reynolds;¹ none of them is very plausible. Perhaps more plausible than any would be one which has apparently not been suggested, *labitur* (rather than Karsten's *elabitur*); cf. Cicero *Tusc.* 4.42 *sunt in lubrico incitatieque semel proclivi labuntur*.

2.12.3 *non inmerito itaque horum contumelias sapiens ut iocos accipit, et aliquando illos tamquam pueros malo poenaque admonet adficit, non quia accepit iniuriam sed quia fecerunt, et ut desinant facere.*

It is all very well for Hermes to list Senecan examples of *asyndeton bimembre* with verbs: the objection is not to the *asyndeton* but to *admonet* followed by the colourless and otiose *adficit*. Fickert's deletion of *adficit* has received some support, but it can hardly be an erroneous repetition of *admonet* and still less a gloss on that word. I suggest that the easiest solution is to read *admonens* (which gives a good *clausula*).

4.29.2 *multi mentiuntur ut decipiant, multi quia decepti sunt; alius criminatione gratiam captat et fingit iniuriam ut videatur doluisse factam; est aliquis malignus et qui amicitias cohaerentis diducere velit; est suspicax et qui spectare ludos cupiat et ex longinquo tutoque speculetur quos conlisit.*

Reynolds reports only one emendation, Abel's ponderous *suspicionum efficax*. One other might have been worth mentioning, Lipsius's *subprocax*; not that this compound is either attested elsewhere or even very likely here, but because the simple *procax* would be quite in place. All the other sentences have a subject expressed (*multi ... multi ... alius ... aliquis*), and concinnity suggests that the last one may have begun *est* ~~(a)~~*ius procax et qui*, etc.

6.1.8 *nam vulnerum quoque sanitas facilis est dum a sanguine recentia sunt: tunc et uruntur et in altum revocantur et digitos scrutantium recipiunt ubi corrupta in malum ulcus verterunt.*

"I venture to suspect the verb *revocantur*. On both sides of it we have an

¹The following editions are referred to: Muretus (1585), Gruter (1593), Lipsius (1605), Gronovius (1649), C. R. Fickert (Leipzig 1843–45), E. Hermes (Leipzig 1905), J. D. Duff (Books 10–12; Cambridge 1915), L. D. Reynolds (Oxford 1977).

extremely concrete surgical idea, *uruntur* and *digitos scrutantium recipiunt*, and, to say the least, an expression which would have to be metaphorically interpreted like *revocantur* is very curious," W. H. Alexander, *AJP* 54 (1933) 358. Lipsius explains *revocantur* as follows: "videtur repeti et revocari vulnus dum stilus ["scalpel"] immittitur." It is true that Seneca's use of *revocare* has caused trouble elsewhere (e.g., 5.14.3 *revocare iactum* = "call for the repetition of the shot"), but in our passage it seems particularly difficult. After an explicit mention of cautery what one would expect is an equally explicit mention of the surgeon's knife; cf. 1.3.2. *ferro et igne curari*, 12.2.2 *urere ac secare*, *Ben.* 5.20.2 *secare et urere*; Fraenkel on Aeschylus *Ag.* 849 *κέαρτες ἢ τεμόντες*. This can be obtained by the alteration of two letters: read *resecantur*.

6.3.4 ... *non eris in aerumnis nec te tormentis macerabis; quae enim, malum, amentia est poenas a se infelicitatis exigere et mala sua †non† augere!*

Suggestions for *non* include *uno*, *novo*, *ultra*, *manu*, none of them convincing. Perhaps a lacuna is more probable, but Koch's *non* <*minuere sed*> is intolerably weak. Rather, I suggest, *non* <*nisi*>, a Senecan locution (e.g., *Ep.* 22.1) which gives an excellent clausula.

6.20.3 *video fidiculas, video verbera, et †membris singulis articulis† singula †docuerunt† machinamenta: sed video et mortem.*

There is no reason why Seneca should not have mentioned both *membra* and *articuli* (in that order) as having their own instruments of torture; the fact that only the latter appear in the parallel passage *Ep.* 24.14, *quid singulis articulis singula machinamenta quibus extorqueantur aptata*, etc., does not justify Castiglioni's deletion of *membris* in our passage. The most satisfactory way of restoring concinnity is to write *membris singulis*, <*singulis*> *articulis*.

On the other hand, Muretus's deletion is the best solution for *docuerunt*. Any main verb, whether *machinamenta* be its subject (e.g., *nocuerunt*) or its object (e.g., *admoverunt*, *aptaverunt*), breaks the *video ... video ... sed video* sequence. I take it that the gloss *docuerunt* was intended by its author to mean "men have invented."

6.23.5 *Fabianus ait, id quod nostri quoque parentes videre, puerum Romae fuisse statura ingentis viri †ante†; sed hic cito decessit, et moriturum brevi nemo <non> prudens dixit.*

There has been some wilful rewriting of this passage. The only two emendations worth mentioning, *ante* <*annos*> and *infantem*, add something which, with *puerum* preceding, is superfluous or worse. I think that *ante* may be the remnant of a present participle agreeing with *puerum*, and suggest <*glori*>-*antem* (which gives a good clausula); the omission would be due to the repetition of the letters *ri*.

6.26.2 *regesne tibi nominem felicissimos futuros si maturius illos mors instantibus subtraxisset malis? an Romanos duces quorum nihil magnitudini deerit si aliquid aetati detraxeris? an nobilissimos viros clarissimosque ad ictum militaris gladi composita cervice †formatos†?*

From the first two sentences it is clear that the sense required in the third is “men who met their death with resignation” (because they felt they had lived too long). All the emendations so far suggested (*deformatos*, *firmatos*, *curvatos*, *servatos*) are wide of the mark. The correct reading, I submit, is *finitos*; for *finire* = *occidere* (or *finiri* = *mori*) cf. *Ep.* 74.26 *sive illi senectus longa contigit sive citra senectutem finitus est*, and the other examples listed in *TLL* 6.1.783.45–67.

7.12.5 *itaque quod unum habebant in malis bonum perdunt, peccandi verecundiam; laudant enim ea quibus erubescabant et vitio gloriantur; ideoque ne resurgere quidem †adulescentiae† licet, cum honestus turpi desidiaie titulus accessit.*

From the emendations listed by Hermes one might well conclude that there is no Latin word suitable for this context which could conceivably have been corrupted to *adulescentiae*. Probably that word is sound, and a noun (in the dative) has disappeared after it. The noun which is suggested by *verecundiam* and *erubescabant* is either *pudor* or *rubor*. For *adulescentiae pudor* (“the shame they felt in their youth”) cf. Cicero *De orat.* 2.3 *ipse adulescentulus, quantum illius ineuntis aetatis meae patiebatur pudor, multa ex eo saepe quaesivi*. As for *rubor*, in *Ep.* 11.3 Seneca points out that, although blushing affects all ages, it is most common *in iuvenibus*.

7.25.2 *quid ergo est? malo quid mihi animi sit ostendere praetextatus et canusinatus quam nudis scapulis aut †sententis†.*

sententis A: *fetentibus* γ

Canusinatus (for the manuscript reading *causatus*) is an emendation of Muretus, who claimed to have found it “in libro Siculo.” He explained it as follows: “canusinae lanae in optimis et pulcherrimis erant [cf. Pliny *Nat.* 8.190]. ... *canusinatus* igitur est molli et delicata veste indutus.” The same emendation is proposed, without mention of Muretus, by W. A. Camps, *AJP* 101 (1980) 446; I regard it as certain, and take the meaning to be “clad in a *toga praetexta* of the finest wool.”

For the obelized word scholars have devised nothing better than *semitectis* and *semitectus*, which are impossibly lame after *nudis*. To contrast with “clad in fine wool” two alternatives are stated: one is “naked;” the other, I submit, should be “clad in rags.” Now the γ reading is, as Muretus realized, a good Latin word (*foetentibus*), of which the A reading could be a corruption; but to make sense, and also to balance *scapulis*, a noun must be inserted after it. That noun, I suggest, is *pannis* (which produces an excellent clausula). I compare Titinius 138 f. (Ribbeck, *Com. Rom. Frag.*³ 180) *tunica et togula obunctula / adimetur, pannos possidebit foetidos*.

7.27.5 *mihi ipsi Alcibiaden et Phaedrum obiectate, o vos †usu† maxime felices cum primum vobis imitari vitia nostra contigerit.*

Schultess's *evasuri* (for *o vos usu*) was adopted by Hermes, and is indeed the only suggestion which is worth recording. But there is no reason why *o vos* should not be sound, and the sense which Schultess wanted can be obtained more economically by reading *o vos* ⟨f⟩*utu*(ri); after the last letter of *vos* an *f* could easily have been omitted.

9.5.3 *hunc [sc. Socratem] tamen Athenae ipsae in carcere occiderunt ... : licet scias ... in florenti ac beata [sc. re publica] †pecuniam†, invidiam, mille alia inertia vitia regnare.*

When Athens was prosperous and happy she put Socrates to death; this shows that †*pecunia*†, envy, and a thousand other *inertia vitia* can hold sway in a state. At 8.8.2 Seneca again says that the *invidia* of the Athenians was one reason for the condemnation of Socrates. What is the other *iners vitium*, which is concealed under *pecuniam*? The suggestions so far made are a sorry lot: *impotentiam*, *petulantiam*, *calumniam*, *saevitiam*. Fortunately Seneca elsewhere (at 4.20.4) gives us the following list of *inertiora vitia* (the manuscripts read *maiora*, but *inertiora* is a very probable emendation in view of the evidence given in *TLL* 7.1.1311.25 and 1312.66): *pavor*, *difficultas*, *desperatio*, *suspiciones*. Of these only the last could be relevant to our passage, but I think it is very relevant both palaeographically (⟨*sus*⟩*pcionem* could conceivably have become *pecuniam*) and in point of sense (suspicion of Socrates can plausibly be attributed to the Athenians).

10.19.1–2 ... *sciturus ... cetera deinceps ingentibus plena miraculis. vis tu relicto solo mente ad ista respicere? nunc, dum calet sanguis, vigentibus ad meliora eundum est.*

"*Vigentibus* vix sanum: ... an delendum?" Reynolds. It looks very like an erroneous repetition of *ingentibus*, slightly changed to make a semblance of sense.

11.3.5 *nihil ergo prodest innocentia ad omnem legem exacta, nihil antiqua frugalitas, ... nihil sincerus et tutus litterarum amor, nihil ab omni labe mens vacans?*

Duff explains *tutus* "in the sense that the retirement of a student is safe from many dangers." So already Gronovius, who had no difficulty in finding supporting passages both in Seneca himself and in other authors, e.g., Ovid *Trist.* 4.10.39 *et petere Aoniae suadebant tuta sorores / otia*. And no doubt it was not Polybius's love of letters which caused Messalina to have him put to death a few years after Seneca addressed this work to him. The fact remains that, in our passage, "*tutus* is irrelevant, and, with *sincerus*, absurd," D. R. Shackleton Bailey, *CR* NS 20 (1970) 360. Most of the suggested emendations (*purus*,

putus, totus, rectus, certus, vetus) are singularly unconvincing. I should prefer *(in)tentus*, a word of which Seneca is fond, e.g., *Ep.* 124.12 *longo studio intentoque*.

11.14.2 *nulla domus in toto orbe terrarum aut est aut fuit sine aliqua comploratione. transibo exempla vulgaria, quae, etiam si minora, tamen †mira† sunt; ad fastus te et annales perducam publicos.*

“There is no family in all the earth, and never has been one, that has not someone to mourn for.” After this sweeping statement Seneca cannot have gone on to say that examples from the common herd are *multa* (so Reynolds for *mira*); even Lipsius’s *innumera* is, at best, weak repetition. The only feasible emendation of *mira* so far suggested is Gruter’s *misera*, but I think that *minora* and *misera* should be transposed: “which, even though they arouse pity, are nevertheless of less importance.”

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